

REMARKS

Claims 61-78 are pending in the application. (No claims have been amended.) However, reconsideration and continued examination of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the remarks which follow.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 61-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2001-236971 to Nagayama (hereafter “Nagayama”) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0238800 to Shinn et al. (hereafter “Shinn”). Specifically, the Office Action alleges that Nagayama teaches a fuel cell manufacturing method for manufacturing a fuel cell, comprising a process of feeding a polymer electrolyte membrane formed in strip form and process of positioning and fixing any of a catalytic layer, a gas diffusion layer and a separator on a surface of the polymer electrolyte membrane. The Office Action admits that Nagayama does not teach conveyance holes and positioning marks, but alleges that Shinn does. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claims 61 and 70 require a polymer electrolyte membrane having conveyance holes formed in series at fixed intervals on a side portion thereof in a lengthwise direction. They further require a **conveyance roller** that comprises projections on an outer periphery thereof to engage with the conveyance holes. The purpose of the projections on the conveyance roller is to engage with the conveyance holes and thereby increase the feeding precision with which a polymer electrolyte membrane is fed from a roll so that the polymer electrolyte membrane is positioned accurately in a predetermined position. *See* paragraphs [0004], [0007] of the corresponding publication for this application (i.e., US-2007-0116999).

In contrast, Shinn teaches that “the supporting bodies of anode 220 and the supporting bodies of cathode 225 have a plurality of protuberances.” Shinn, paragraph [0117]. The protuberances in Shinn are formed in a carbon paper, not on an outer periphery of a conveyance roller. *See* Shinn, paragraph [0184]. The holes according to Shinn are formed in another carbon paper such that the two carbon papers are attached to each other. *See* Shinn, paragraph [0184]. The purpose of the protuberances in Shinn is to “increase the area of a three-phase boundary in which oxidation-reduction reaction of hydrogen and oxygen occurs and decrease resistance to ion conduction,” increasing the output of power density.

Shinn, Abstract. The protuberances in Shinn are entirely unrelated to increasing feeding precision.

Also, Shinn does not teach a conveyance roller comprising on an outer periphery thereof projections which engage with the conveyance holes, as required by claims 61 and 70.

Because Nagayama and Shinn do not teach every element of claims 61 and 70, claims 61 and 70 are not unpatentable over Nagayama in view of Shinn. Claims 62-69 and 71-78 are dependent on claims 61 and 70, and are not unpatentable over Nagayama in view of Shinn for at least the reasons outlined above.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing or a credit card payment form being unsigned, providing incorrect information resulting in a rejected credit card transaction, or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith,

Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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